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## **Former chemical industry official Beck, now at Trump White House, again interferes to weaken EPA action on dangerous chemicals: This time it's PFAS**

By [Richard Denison](#) / [Bio](#) / Published: April 20, 2020

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It was only in February that [Reveal News' Elizabeth Shogren exposed](#) the Trump White House's role in [dramatically weakening](#) the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) draft risk evaluation for the solvent trichloroethylene (TCE), which is linked to [fetal heart defects at low doses](#). The White House's 11<sup>th</sup>-hour intervention, led by [former chemical industry official Dr. Nancy Beck](#), forced EPA to rely on a different health effect that would allow 500 times greater exposures to the ubiquitous toxic chemical.

There was every reason to expect this episode was not a one-off, given Beck's other actions both [while at EPA](#) and [once arriving at the White House](#). Sure enough, last week [Ellen Knickmeyer of the Associated Press](#) exposed another such incident, this time involving a group of chemicals collectively known as "perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances" or PFAS that are showing up as environmental contaminants all over the country.

Knickmeyer reported on [documents obtained by Senator Tom Carper of Delaware](#), ranking member of the Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee, that detail Beck's largely successful effort to scale back a rule EPA first proposed in 2015. Called a [Significant New Use Rule](#), or SNUR, it would require companies seeking to import products containing certain PFAS to notify EPA in advance, thereby allowing EPA to determine whether to allow the import and impose needed restrictions. Sen. Carper made the documents public via a letter he sent to EPA Administrator

Andrew Wheeler calling on EPA to finalize the original rule instead of the watered-down re-proposed rule EPA released for public comment in February.

*Beck's first order of business was to compel her former colleagues at EPA to submit the proposed PFAS rule for White House review, which neither the Obama administration nor the Trump administration up to that point had deemed necessary.*

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